



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

May 6, 2008

H.R. 3930

Lesser Prairie Chicken National Habitat Preservation Area Act of 2008

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Natural Resources on April 30, 2008

H.R. 3930 would establish the Lesser Prairie Chicken National Habitat Preservation Area on about 37,000 acres of land in New Mexico. Based on information provided by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which would manage the preservation area, CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 3930 would cost about \$800,000 over the next three years. We estimate that enacting the legislation would have no significant effect on direct spending or revenues.

H.R. 3930 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments. State and local governments could benefit from grants authorized by the bill.

Under H.R. 3930, BLM would convey to New Mexico about 7,700 acres of land within the state in exchange for about 13,000 acres of nearby state property. Most of the land to be conveyed by New Mexico would be added to existing BLM holdings of about 28,000 acres to form the new preservation area. In addition, BLM would be authorized to acquire private lands within the boundaries of the preservation area. All land within that area would be withdrawn, subject to valid existing rights, from programs to commercially develop public lands, except that grazing would be allowed in certain situations. Finally, BLM would prepare a comprehensive plan for the new preservation area and would develop signs and other exhibits to help interpret the area's historical and natural resources.

CBO estimates that BLM would spend about \$300,000 to acquire about 300 acres of private land for the preservation area over the next three years. We estimate that an additional \$500,000 would be spent for one-time planning, interpretation, and other activities to protect and develop resources within the new preservation area, including surveying and other activities related to the property exchange. Finally, we estimate that ongoing costs to manage newly acquired acreage within and near the area would be minimal.

For this estimate, CBO assumes that the properties to be exchanged would be determined by NPS to be roughly equal in value. Also, we expect that the federal acreage to be conveyed to New Mexico will generate no income over the next 10 years; therefore, offsetting receipts (a credit against direct spending) would not be affected by the bill.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. The estimate was approved by Theresa Gullo, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.